



**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
Our Mission: Save lives, prevent injuries, reduce vehicle-related crashes

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## **U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood Announces Intensive Holiday Drunk & Impaired Driving Crackdown & Advertising Blitz**

### **New Data Show States with Best & Worst Improvement in Drunk Driving Fatality Rates**

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and R. Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, today kicked off the "Over the Limit. Under Arrest" national drunk and impaired driving crackdown involving thousands of law enforcement agencies during the holiday season. In addition, Secretary LaHood announced new data showing states with the best – and worst – improvement over the last year in addressing drunk driving behavior.

"Drunk driving is a major public safety threat that still claims thousands of lives every year," Secretary LaHood said. "Many states continue to step up their efforts to get drunk drivers off our roads, but the numbers tell us we have to do more. Drinking and driving is dangerous and unacceptable, and I'm asking law enforcement to stay vigilant during this busy holiday season."

"Like alcohol, drugs impair perception, judgment, motor skills and memory. These effects can be dangerously magnified when drugs are consumed with alcohol, even in cases where a driver's blood alcohol level is below legal limits," said Director Kerlikowske. "Driving while impaired, from alcohol, drugs, or both, puts us all at risk and must be prevented."

According to research by DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), five states have shown great reductions in alcohol-impaired driving fatality rates from 2007 to 2008. Those include Vermont, Wisconsin, Maine, Nebraska and Minnesota. The states with the least progress are Idaho, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Kansas and New Hampshire. Driving with a blood alcohol level of .08 or higher is illegal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

"My message to drivers is this: if you decide to drink, find a safe and sober ride home or your chances of arrest are extremely high," said Secretary LaHood. "Law enforcement officers will be out in full force during the upcoming holiday, especially at night and on the weekends, looking for the drunk drivers that put the rest of us at risk."

Prior NHTSA research has consistently shown that more people are killed in crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver on the weekends and at night – when most of the holidays occur this calendar year. In 2008 alone, 58 percent of drivers and motorcycle riders were killed in crashes that took place over the weekend and at night were alcohol-impaired.

This holiday enforcement crackdown is being supported by more than \$7 million in national TV and radio advertising and runs from December 16 to January 3.

To view the state-by-state report [click here](#). To learn more about the "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest" campaign [click here](#).